The Story of Thórðr Hreða

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The Story of Thórðr Hreða

Chapter 1

Thórðr hight a man, who was the son of Hörða-Kári, a man of great reputation; he was chief over the counties which lay next to his. He was Lord by title, but superior to Earls in many things. He had a noble wife, by whom he had three sons and one daughter. The eldest son was called Steingrímrr, the second Klyppr, the third Eyjúlfr, and the daughter Sigríðr. All the bairns were promising, but Klyppr was the foremost of his brothers. They were all mighty men, wonderfully fine and strong fellows, as their forefathers had been. Their sister Sigríðr was the finest of women, dressy and high-minded. She was more skilful than any of her mates that grew up with her. When the brothers were nearly of age, their father took illness and died, and his burial was magnificent according to ancient custom. And when the funeral feast was over (drunk), the wife of Thórðr gave birth to a fine boy; to him a name was given, and, according to the wife's wishes, was called Thórðr after his father, as she thought he would become a great man, if he was like his kinsmen. And when Thórðr grew up, he was mighty and strong, promising, hard and furious against all whom he thought little of, but friendly towards the people; he was munificent with his money, gentle of conversation, and a steadfast friend; he was a great jovial man, the most nimble at sports, could swim better than any one, and was a good poet At the time when this happened, the sons of Gunnhildr reigned over Norway; and when Thórðr grew up, he wished to become one of the men of King Gamli, the son of Gunnhildr, who of all men was the most beloved King of Norway, with the exception of Hákon Aðalsteinsfóstri. Thórðr was twelve years of age when he went to the Court of King Gamli, and the King considered him a great man in everything he had to do; and he was with the King for three winters. He always went before the King in every danger and peril, when the King was engaged in warfare, wherefore he received great honour and fame, for which he was widely known. When Thórðr had stayed three winters with King Gamli, he said to the King that he wished to seek his possessions. The King replied: "You have given us good assistance, and you will become a great man." The King unfastened his sword (sabre), which he was wont to carry daily, and said to Thórðr, "Here is a sword, which I wish to give to you, and I think good luck will attend it, and with it shall my friendship follow." Thórðr thanked him for this honour and everything else which he had shown him. The King said: "This I beg of you, that you give it to no one, and never part with it, except you have to redeem your own head; and it is not unlikely that you will want to do that." Then Thórðr answers: "I intend, my Lord, not to stay for a long time away from you, while I have the chance to accompany you." The King replies: "That will not be so; for we shall never see one another, now that we part." Thórðr became silent at the King's words, and answered nought; then he took leave of the King, went home to his possessions, and his relatives were glad to see him. Klyppr, his brother, had taken possession of all their property, and had become a chief over all the counties over which his father had ruled; he was also a Lord by title. But short time after Thórðr went away from King Gamli, King Hákon the Good and King Gamli had a fight, and in that battle fell King Gamli. which is narrated in the Sagas of the Kings of Norway.

King Sigurðr "Slefa," the son of Gunnhildr, was a very licentious man; he had induced Alöf, the daughter of Skeggi of Yrjum, to leave her husband the Lord Klyppr, the son of Thórðr (the elder). Thórðr did often invite (egg) his brother Klyppr to seek a revenge, and one day Thórðr came to speak with his brother, and said: "How is this? Are you not going to drive off your hands the disgrace which lies on your shoulders with regard to King Sigurðr, and become such a wonder as to have every one's reproof, and will never be looked upon as such a man as your former kinsmen were, if you can bear such an insult on the part of King Sigurðr, without seeking revenge? Although we have to contend with great difference as regards strength, yet it is better to die with honour, if that should be our fate, than to suffer such a disgrace without doing anything at all. I offer myself to go with you, as well as all

my brothers, rather than endure this any longer without any revenge, however it may fare." Then answers Klyppr: "True it is, brother, what thou sayest, that it was fully necessary to revenge this disgrace, if an opportunity should offer; and I am heartily willing to take revenge upon him for the insult." After this interview, all the brothers betake themselves from home with a large troop of men in the direction of the Uplands, where they heard that King Sigurðr was at a banquet. And when they arrive at the house in which the King was present and sat at table, the brothers arrange their men for entering, and Thórðr said that the man who was the last to enter should be the first to go out. Klyppr was to be the first to enter, next to him Thórðr, then Steingrímrr, then Eyjúlfr, and then the others according to arrangement. They were all fully armed with helms, shields, and drawn swords. And when Lord Klyppr came before King Sigurðr, he drew his sword and struck the King on the head, and split it open right down to the shoulders; the King then fell dead on to the table. After this the brothers retire farther out into the hall, and in the same moment Thórðr heard a crash behind him, and observed that his brother Klyppr had been struck a death-blow. The man who did this was called Hróaldr, the son of Ögmundr, the son of Hörda-Kári; he was a near relative of the sons of Thórðr; he was waiting at the King’s table when they entered, wherefore they did not notice him; another man did he kill, who was hight Ögmundr, and he was the son of ValÞjófr; and when Thórðr observes the fall of his brother, he struck at Hróaldr and split him asunder above the hips. Then the men sprang up all about the hall, drew their swords, and attacked the brothers furiously, but they defended themselves well and manly. Thórðr made good use of the sword which King Gamli had presented him with, and became slayer of many before he could get out. It came to pass here as it always does, that, when one suddenly loses his chief, most of the men become disorderly, when they should follow their enemies, and so it was here, and the brothers returned to their homes. King Haraldr quickly heard this news -- the fall of his brother, King Sigurðr -- and intends to send men against the brothers for the purpose of killing them. At that time the King was north in the land, wherefore it took longer time than otherwise would have been the case; he summoned "Þing," and had the brothers outlawed from the whole of Norway, but took possession of their property.

Chapter 2

Now there is to be said, that the brothers came home and related the fall of King Sigurðr and their brother Klyppr. It now seemed to the brothers that they would not be able to remain in the land on account of the power of King Haraldr and Gunnhildr. Their kinsmen and friends then wished to sell their estates for ready money, and added that Thórðr should go in search for Iceland, whither many noble men had gone, who had to flee from the country before the Kings of Norway. Then Thórðr answers: "Not had I intended to flee from my property (go in exile), but as there are many noble men, who have been content with settling in Iceland, then it may be that something similar may be my fate." After this Thórðr made himself ready for a journey to Iceland, and with him his brothers Steingrímrr and Eyjulfr and his sister Sigríðr. They had with them great many chattels. He had nineteen men on board his ship. He then proceeded to sea, and this was in the early summer. They were a month at sea, and touched the Vestman Islands; thence they sailed to the west coast of the land, and to the north beyond the Strands ; they sailed into the bay, and kept themselves nearer to the north coast. They then put into one firth and took there land about the beginning of winter. Soon people came to them, and they asked them the name of the firth they had come to. They were informed that they had come to Miðfjörðr. They landed in the mouth of Miðfjörðr, and at that time Miðfjörðr was completely peopled. Skeggi, who was called Miðfjarðar-Skeggi, dwelt at Reykir. He was the son of Skinna-Bjöm. The reason for him being called Skinna-Björn was, that he was wont to sail on mercantile business to the East, and bring thence grey skins (grey fur), beaver-skins, and sable-fur. Skeggi was a great hero and fighter in single combats. He had been long journeying as viking, and once he came to Denmark, and went to Hleiðr, where the mound of King Hrólfr ("the Crow") was, broke into the mound and took away the sword of King Hrólfr, "Sköfnungr," which is the best sword ever came to Iceland. He also

took the axe, which Hjalti ("the Stout-hearted") had owned, but he could not get Laufi from Böðvar "bjarki," for he could in no way bend his arms. From that time Skeggi carried the sword "Sköfnungr." Miðfjarðar-Skeggi was great chief and wealthy. He had mighty kinsmen. All the inhabitants of Miðfjörðr had chosen him as their chief. His father, Björn, had taken possession of the whole of Miðfjörðr before him. He was a "goðarð" man (temple priest) in Miðfjörðr, and in many other places. Eyjúlfr hight a good farmer; he dwelt at Ós, and was a rich man. There was another farmer, named Thorkell; he dwelt at a farm named Sandar, on the west side of the firth, opposite Ós. He was a mean man, but rich in money, and a friend of Skeggi of Reykir. Thorkell had offered Skeggi to bring up one of his children, and when Thórðr came to Miðfjörðr, Eiðr, the son of Skeggi, was being brought up at Sandar. Eyjúlfr, the farmer from Ós, was the first man who came to the chapmen and had a talk with them. Thórðr asked how it was the farmers were so slow in coming to the ship. Eyjúlfr said it was a custom, that Skeggi, as a rule, came first to the ship, and took that of the goods which he liked. Also did he receive those of the chapmen he liked for wintering at his house. Thórðr said that his pride was great, "but, on the contrary, I am told, that it is the custom of the inhabitants of the land to visit the chapmen, who have newly arrived from sea to inquire after news." Eyjúlfr answered: "Let us go and see Skeggi, and he will receive well such a man as thou art." Thórðr said: "On board my ship I intend to stay, and await there what will happen." Then quoth Eyjúfr: "I shall go and see Skeggi, and inform him of the arrival of the ship." Thórðr answers: Can you not do as you like?" and then they parted. Eyjulfr went to Reykir to meet Skeggi, and told him of the ship’s arrival, also who the master was. Skeggi said that he knew well Thórðr and his parents; said that he was a serviceable man, and never had a more noble or a better person come to this land, and praised him highly. Eyjulfr asked Skeggi to ride down to the ship and choose those of the chapmen whom he liked to invite home. Skeggi answered: "It always pains me that you show me honour in all things, but once will I show you that honour, to elect those of the chapmen you like, for none of this crew shall I receive in my home. But this I advise you, that you give Thórðr no promise, unless you mean keeping it, for he thinks little of making one or another bow to the earth, if he takes that into his head." Then they parted, and Eyjulfr rode to the ship, saw the master, and told Thórðr of the interview with Skeggi. Thórðr said: "You fare well (behave generously), but it seems to me from this, that Skeggi intends picking quarrel with me; and I fancy therefore, it is more likely that I should show him a little deference." Eyjulfr said: "That would be my wish, that we should visit Skeggi." Thórðr answered: "I shall not go at all; but as Skeggi will receive no chapman to sit by his side this winter, then let him keep his pride to himself as long as he likes." Eyjúlfr invited Thórðr to stay with him for the winter at Ós, but asked him to get an abode for the other chapmen round the firth. Thórðr thanked him for his invitation, but said that he would not take up his abode with him. Thórðr asked if Eyjulfr would let his farm during the winter, and that Eyjulfr did, but betook himself to Torfastaðir, for there he possessed another farm; but Thórðr took the farm at Ós. Thereafter he had the whole cargo brought home, and the ship drawn on shore. With Thórðr went home his brothers and sister and all the crew, and dwelt there quiet during the winter. Skeggi behaved as if nothing had happened, but he and Thórðr did not speak when they met. Skeggi did not make as if he knew about the agreement or action of Thórðr and Eyjulfr. Thórðr had many men, and was himself a very jovial one, and so were his brothers. Thórðr soon became beloved by the people of his district. Skeggi did not like that much, and thought likely that he would wish to become chief over Miðfjörðr, wherefore he envied Thórðr, for he was hard-tempered, and could not endure that others should be held in the same honour as himself. Thórðr had sports during the winter, and the brothers, as well as the men from Baer, took part in them, but none equalled Thórðr, neither in agility nor in strength. Thórðr was a great active man, as well as a fine handicraftsman.

During the winter Thórðr built a boat down by the mouth of Miðfjörðr, where he, as a rule, spent his days. His intention was, that this boat should go in the spring to the Strands for fishing. Thus time lasted to Yule, and towards Yule Skeggi sent a man to Thorkell of Sandar, and invited him and his wife to a Yule feast; he also asked, that the boy Eiðr might accompany them; he was then young, but still grown pretty strong. They prepared themselves to go away from Sandar on the day before Yule,

and with them the boy Eiðr. Such was the weather that thaw had set in with rain, and the river of Miðfjörðr impassable. The ice on the river began to thaw higher up, but down by the firth it was passable in a boat, and when Thorkell put forward the boat, Thórðr addressed him, saying, "Man! the river is impassable." Thorkell answers, "Look after your work, I will see to my journey." Thorkell put the boat into the river, and the three were now on board; when they had got fairly out, the ice began to thaw very quickly, so they got on slowly. They drifted down the river before the ice and the current, which ended in the capsizing of the boat. They had a ducking, and were nearly drowned; but there was a longer life in store for them, and Thorkell got them on the keel of the boat. The boat now drifted towards the sea, and opposite where Thórðr was at work, and his brother Steingrímrr with him. Then Thorkell called to Thórðr and asked him for help, but answers Thórðr: "I will look after my work, you attend to your journey." Steingrímrr said, "Do well, my brother, and save the people, for now their lives are in danger, and show thy skill." Then Thórðr casts off the outer clothes, throws himself into the water, and swims out to the boat; he had to break the ice, and push it away from him in all directions. And when he reached the boat, he first took the boy Eiðr, put him between his shoulders, fastened him with a string, and swam with him on shore: and asked his brother, Steingrímrr, to help the boy, that he might get warm. Thereupon he swam to the boat again, took the wife of Thorkell, who had become much exhausted, and brought her to land. For the third time he swims out to the boat, and brings Thorkell to land, who was nearly dead from the cold. Steingrímrr asked, "Why did you bring the boy first?" Thórðr says: "Therefore did I bring Eiðr first, because my mind tells me, that to me this youth will be of much use, and he will save my life. But therefore did I bring Thorkell last, thinking he would best stand the cold, and again I thought, that in him was the least loss even if he had perished." Thereupon changes Thorkell his clothes, and recovered his strength as well as his wife. After this they went to Reykir, but Thórðr invited Eiðr home with him to Ós. Eiðr says that he will willingly accept the invitation, and stayed there for a long time. But now there is to be related, that Thorkell came to Reykir and spoke of his unfortunate journey. Skeggi says, that a most unfortunate journey had he had, and moreover left my son with that man, who is the most violent man; he added, that his mind told him, time would come when one would give a great deal that Eiðr had never come to Thórðr. But when Yule had passed, Thorkell went home, and on his way called at Ós, and asked Eiðr to go with him. Eiðr answers: "I shall not go with thee, and you shall not again try to destroy my life." "I would no more have caused your death than I would my own," answered Thorkell; went home, and is now out of the Saga.

Chapter 3

Eiðr was a constant faithful follower of Thórðr, and so was Thórðr very yielding to him. Thórðr was mostly engaged in building the boat, and the boy Eiðr with him. Thórðr had always with him the sword which Gamli gave him, and so it was this time. Eiðr took up the sword and played with it. Thórðr saw this, and said: "Do you like the sword, my foster-son?" He answered, "Very well." Thórðr said: "Then I will give you the sword." Eiðr answered: "Never shall I be able to reward you for such a valuable gift, but friendship will I give you, my foster-father, if it be thought of little worth." Thórðr replied: "Accept my thanks for this, my foster-son, and your reward will be both often and great." Thereupon went they home, and Eiðr showed the sword to all the inmates, and was greatly pleased with it. A short time after went Eiðr to Reykir, to see his father. Skeggi received him coolly, and asked: "Why did you think the fostering-place at Thórðr was better than the one I got you at Thorkell?" Eiðr replied: "Totally is the place different in all respects; for Thórðr is a great man, and one can gain some good from him, but Thorkell is both a mean man and a fool; he would have killed me through his foolishness and want of foresight, but Thórðr saved my life, and he has also given me the most valuable gift." "Through the care of Thorkell is it, that you hold the life; he did not wish any more for your death than he did for his own or his wife's; but I will look at this costly thing which you praise so highly, that I may see if I think it of much worth." Eiðr showed him the sword. Skeggi drew

it out, liked it very much, and said: "That is evident, that this valuable thing has belonged to some nobleman, and it is a great jewel; and I do not believe that he has given you such a valuable and rare thing." Eiðr said: "It seems to me then unlikely, that you would assist me as to rewards, as you do not believe that he has given it me." Skeggi said: "Gladly wish I, that you had not accepted this costly gift." Eiðr answered: "As to this we have to differ." After this Eiðr went home, and the parting of father and son this time was anything but friendly. Thórðr received his foster-son well, and inquired as to the conversation which took place between father and son. Eiðr explained everything which had passed. Thórðr answered: "This I expected, and very much wishes your father to show me enmity; and this is my opinion that some further difficulties will spring up between me and your father and his kinsmen, and it is not easily foreseen to what end they will come; so that you will often, with great danger, be obliged to go between." Eiðr answered: "Pleased should I be, if I could do some good between you."

There was a man called Ásbjörn; he was the son of Thorstein "the White" and Sigríðr, the sister of Miðfjarðar-Skeggi. He came out to Iceland this summer, and landed at Blönduós in Langidalr. When Skeggi ascertained the arrival of his kinsman, he rode down to the ship, receives him well, and invites him to go home with him, and take as many men with him as he liked. Ásbjörn accepted this invitation, landed his ship, and went home to Reykir, and two men with him. Ásbjörn was a very tall man, handsome, and highly esteemed. He was so strong, that his equal could scarcely be found. He was a cheery man, and went mostly to a bath for pleasure’s sake. One day went he and Skeggi to bathe, as their wont was, and lay by the side of the bath in conversation. Sigríðr of Ós went the same day to a hot spring with her linen, and was making herself ready to go home. She went by where they lay. Ásbjörn was a very pompous man with regard to dress. They saw where the woman went. She had on a red kirtle (gown) and a blue cloak. The woman was both handsome and tall, and altogether very smart. Ásbjörn raised himself up on his elbow, and looked at her over his shoulder. Then Ásbjörn asked who this handsome woman was: "It seems to me possible that this woman will find my love." Skeggi answered: "Her name is Sigríðr, and she is the daughter of Thórðr, the son of Hörða-Kári; but this advice I give you, that you have nothing to do with her." Ásbjörn asked, "Why should that be so?" Skeggi answered: "Her brothers are full of fierceness, and very unruly." Ásbjörn replied, "I had thought to be my own adviser before every man here in this land." Skeggi said, "It will show itself, whether you need no help before you part, if you should take any more liberty with them than they like." After this they went home.

Now there is to be said, that Sigríðr came home to Ós. Her brother Thórðr went to meet her. He said: "Why are you so pale, my sister? It seems as if Ásbjörn ’Veisugalti,’ has made you change colour, but many things will pass between us before he gets you for his wife." So the winter passed; all was quiet. Ásbjörn never mentioned Sigríðr. There was ball-playing on the ice in Miðfjörðr between Reykir and Ós, for the firth was early covered with ice. At this time there were many vigorous men in Miðfjörðr. Thórðr and Ásbjörn, the kinsman of Skeggi, were the most vigorous of those who took part in the sports. Skeggi did not take part in the sports, as he was getting old, but was quite strong to use his weapon. He therefore looked on, and enjoyed himself much. He and Thórðr never spoke together, and much coolness seemed to exist between them. It happened one day that Thórðr and Ásbjörn took part in the sports, and were to play together, and once Thórðr threw Ásbjörn on the ice with a huge thump. "There fell ’Veisugalti,’" said Thórðr, but he made no reply. Another time, when they had to go together, Ásbjörn seized Thórðr with such strength that he fell on his knees. "And there fell the man with the maiden-cheek," said Ásbjörn, "and you ought scarcely to take part in sports with vigorous men." Thórðr said: "That you will first see, ’Veisugalti,’ when we try weapons, which of us has to look up when we leave off that sport." Ásbjörn said he was quite ready, and seized his weapons. People went then between them, and they were parted. Now the winter passes. Ásbjörn rode to his ship in the spring, and prepared it ready for sea. Skeggi accompanied Ásbjörn to the ship with many men, because he thought there was nothing bad that one could not expect from Thórðr. Thórðr stayed at home and

pretended to know nothing. Ásbjörn said to Skeggi: "The case is this, kinsman, that I am thinking of marrying, and I should like to be my own counsellor." Skeggi said, "Where is the woman to whom your mind mostly looks to?" Ásbjörn answered; "I will not conceal it; it is Sigríðr, the sister of Thórðr of Ós; she is the woman to whom my mind looks most forward to to get for a wife." Skeggi answered: "I do not think it likely that we shall succeed in this, and also I am unwilling to bring this case before Thórðr, on account of the coolness which has reigned between you before." Ásbjörn said that the only enmity, which had been between them, had been of little worth, and added, that he would not lose the best match on account of that, if he could obtain it. At last Skeggi promised to woo the woman on his behalf. "My advice is, that you do not give up your journey abroad on account of this." Skeggi rode home, but Ásbjörn went abroad that summer. Short time after Skeggi arrived home, there was news about that a ship had arrived in the White River in Borgarfjörðr, and when the news came, great number of people from the northern districts, both from Miðfjörðr and other places, went to trade with the chapmen. Skeggi also prepared himself to ride to the ship with many men. And when Eiðr heard that his father intended going to the ship, he said to Thorðr: "Have you any intention of going to the ship, foster-father?" Thórðr said: "Why should I want my goods any less than other farmers? and I shall certainly go." Eiðr said: "Then I will ride with you, and hear other people’s conversation, and thus acquaint myself with the market." Thórðr answered: "It will do better for our journey, if you accompany me, my foster-son, for so my mind tells me, that I shall greatly need you on this journey, if my dreams forebode anything." Eiðr said: "What did you dream, my foster-father?" Thórðr said: "I dreamt I had come to the White River in Borgar-fjörðr, and was conversing with some foreign men, especially with regard to some bargain, and in the same moment a quantity of wolves entered the shop, and I had a great disgust for them; then they turned upon me, tore my clothes, and wished to kill me, but I drew my sword, hewed one of the wolves across the middle, and the head of another. Thereupon they ran at me from all sides, but I seemed to defend myself, and became very wroth; but it seemed as if I could not foresee how it would fare with me. In the same moment a young bear leapt before me, and would defend me, and I woke up. It seems to me this dream forebodes great tidings." Eiðr said: "It is evident that this forebodes some men’s evil minds towards you. Now it is my advice, that you ride from home at the same time as my father, though you do not converse together." Thórðr said: "That will I do for the sake of your request." Thórðr made himself ready, and Eiðr with him. And when Thórðr prepared himself, his sister Sigríðr said: "Brother! I wish you would buy me a cloak, a very choice one." Thórðr answered: "That will I do, but it strikes me it will be dear enough before the end."

Chapter 4

Thórðr and Eiðr rode to the ship at the same time as Skeggi, for Eiðr requested Thórðr to do so. And when they arrived at the ship, they both threw their tent over one booth.

A man by the name of Jón is now introduced into the Saga. He lived at Hvassafelli in Norðrárdalr. He was a wealthy man, unforbearing and much disliked. Guðrún was his wife’s name. She was very gaudy in dress, and ambitious. Her brother hight Auðúlfr: Glúmr hight their father. He lived at Skarðshamrar. They intended to ride to the ship at the same time Thórðr and Skeggi were there. And as they were riding from home Guðrún said to her husband, that he ought to buy her a fine mantle, for she was a dressy woman. This the husband promised. They now continue their journey until they come to Hvítárvellir. Then was the market at the fullest. They, Jón and Auðúlfr, went through the booths. They came into a booth of a man whose name was Thórir ("the Rich"), and asked for a cloak if it could be had. He said that he had a cloak, "but, farmer, you will think it dear." Jón answered: "Let us hear what there is to pay." The Eastman valued the cloak, but Jón thought it too dear. Auðúlfr would that he should buy the cloak, and offered him some of his money. Jón went away, and when they came out, Auðúlfr egged him on to buy the cloak, as he had promised his sister to do so. "Why should you not have your own will?" said Jón, "and we will go home for the price." But this caused some delay. It is

said that Thórðr and Eiðr went through the booths demanding goods for purchase. They came into the booth of Thórir ("the Rich") and wished to buy the cloak. Thórir says that he knows Thórðr and his parents, "so I will not put any price on it for you, but wish that you would accept it." Thórðr thanked him, and said: "This I will accept, and let the cloak lie here while I go and fetch its worth." "I do wish," says Thórir, "that you had it with you." "That is of no consequence," says Thórðr; and he and Eiðr went to fetch its worth. When Thórðr had gone, Jón and Auðúlfr entered the booth, and asked the Eastman to hand them over the cloak. He said the cloak was sold, "for you would not give as much for it as I valued it." Jón said that he would have it; and in the same moment Thórðr and Eiðr came into the booth with the price for it. Thórðr seized the cloak, but Auðúlfr drew his sword, and was going to smite Thórðr. Jón also ran against Thórðr and was going to deal him a blow, but Thórðr immediately drew his sword, turned against Auðúlfr, and smote him in the head, and he fell there and then dead on the floor. Eiðr ran before Thórðr, when he saw Jón's outrage, and warded off the blow with the shield, but took the cloak under his hand. This saw Thórðr, and smote at Jón with the sword; the blow hit him in the middle and cut him in two above the hips. Jón's and Auðúlfr's companions then attacked him, but Thórðr retreated out of the booth, jumped on a pile of rafters, wherefrom he defended himself well and bravely. The men of the district and those from Borgarfjörðr flocked to the place and wished to revenge the death of Jón and Auðúlfr, but Eiðr went to see his father, and asked him with his men to come and help Thórðr. Skeggi says: "What has Thórðr been doing that he is not capable to help himself?" Eiðr answered: "He has killed two men." "Who are they?" says Skeggi. "Auðúlfr and Jón," says Eiðr. "What was the reason?" says Skeggi. Eiðr says: "They would rob him of a cloak which he had bought; and one of the two would have killed him, had I not defended him. Do not let the coolness which has reigned between you go so far, that you take more notice of that than of the fact that he is from the same district as yourself; he is also my life's saviour and foster-father." Skeggi did not answer. Thereupon Eiðr went away, and to the place where they attacked Thórðr, and drew his sword. And when Thórðr saw Eiðr, his foster-son, he said: "Do not endanger thy life for my sake." But when Eiðr had gone out of the tent, Skeggi stood up and said: "The pig is sure to squeal, if the sow be killed." Thereupon he took the sword, Sköfnungr, and went to the place where they were still attacking Thórðr; but he had defended himself so bravely, that they had not been able to inflict a wound upon him, but he had wounded many. When Skeggi came, he went on so furiously, that those who had attacked Thórðr had to retreat. Thereupon Skeggi effected a settlement reconciliation between them; he was to be the sole judge in the whole affair, and he there and then gave his verdict. Thórðr was to pay two hundred of silvers for the murder of Jón, but Auðulfr should fall unholy because of his outrage and plot against the life of Thórðr. Those who had been wounded should carry their wounds without reward, for the sake of their plot against him and attack on him, and thus they parted. When Skeggi was ready, he rode home. At the same time Thórðr rode to the north and Eiðr went with him, but he and Skeggi had no conversation during the whole of the journey. They ride on until they come to the river Miðfjarðará. Then Skeggi said: "Here we will alight, for I have something to say to you, Thórðr," and so they did. Then said Skeggi: "Ásbjörn, my kinsman, asked me to make a proposal on his behalf, and wished me to woo your sister, Sigríðr, for him; and I should now like to know what your answer might be in this case." Thórðr says: "Little friendship exists between me and Ásbjörn. Neither have you been much of a friend hitherto, and never came it into my mind that you would seek here an alliance for your kinsman; well do I know that Ásbjörn is a highborn man, rich and a strong fellow, but I do not know how my brothers or herself will like this bargain." Skeggi answers: "Therefore did I mention the case to you, rather than to your brothers, because I know that they will follow your advice, both as regards this and other matters." Thórðr answers: "Most likely will they act according to my will, but to no man shall I give her without her sanction; but I expect she will not go contrary to my advice." Then says Eiðr: "I wish you would give my father a satisfactory answer as regards this wooing, and value highly his recommendation." Thórðr says: "So it shall be; for Skeggi gave me a great assistance in this journey, and I will recognise it; for I will come to terms with you, Skeggi, as to the courting of Sigríðr. She shall sit in troth for three winters, and if Ásbjörn does not

arrive within these three winters, then this agreement is of no worth, but should he come to the country before, then he has a right to the marriage of Sigríðr." Skeggi consented to this. Thereupon held Thórðr out his hand, and Skeggi took it, thus concluding the bargain. Witnesses were then taken as to this promise. Then said Skeggi: "Now have you fared well, Thórðr! but lucky was it that your sister got the cloak rather than the wife of Jón. It seems to me very likely that the men of Borgarfjörðr will remember what kind of meeting yours was. I will therefore lengthen your name, and call you Thórðr Hreða ('the Terror')." Thórðr said: "I am well pleased if they have some memory of my coming there, and then I have no dislike to the name, but methinks seldom will this district be without a Terror." After this they rode home. When Thórðr came home he was well received ; he was asked what news there was. He told everything in the clearest manner. Thereupon he asked his brothers and sister to have a talk with him, and told them of his promise. Sigríðr answered: "It seems to me, brother, that you have acted rather rashly as regards the promise of marriage on my behalf, as I was not consulted before." Thórðr answered: "This agreement shall have no further value than yourself will consent to." "This I could expect from you, and, with your foresight, I will be content in the matter." Thórðr thanked her for the answer, gave her the cloak, and told her of his quarrel with Jón and Auðúlfr. After this, Thórðr kept at home quiet, and Eiðr constantly with him.

Chapter 5

This same summer a ship arrived in Blönduós in Langidalr. By that ship came Ormr, nephew of Skeggi and brother of Ásbjörn. But when Skeggi hears of the arrival of his kinsman, he rides to the ship, and invites Ormr home to stay the winter over, and Ormr went home with him. Ormr was this kind of a man, that he was stronger than any other, and a most valiant man; he was full of fierceness, considered no one his equal, was a great fighter in single combats, and full of injustice. It happened one day when Ormr went to the Springs, that Sigríðr from Ós was there, and another woman with her. He thought much of her, and inquired who she was. He was told her name and her kin. He spoke to Skeggi and said: "The fact of the matter is this, that I wish you to woo Sigríðr of Ós on my behalf." Skeggi answered: "This woman I will not woo for you, but any other woman you may wish I will propose to for you." Ormr said: "Either must you woo Sigríðr or no one else." Skeggi answered: "Why should I woo on your behalf your brother's betrothed?" Ormr said: "I don't care, if she is my brother's betrothed, but if you do not woo her for me there will be some quarrel in the district, for then I shall beguile her, and the brothers will hinder that, but I shall not mind it, and so you will have to assist in the case." Then Skeggi said: "Sigríðr will not allow herself to be beguiled by you, and you are much conceited to think you can get her so dishonourably, and this will be to your shame, for a heavier load has Thórðr overturned, when he and his brothers killed King Sigurðr "Slefa," the son of Gunnhildr." Ormr said: "That will take its own course; I shall chance it, if you will not woo her on my behalf." Skeggi answered: "Rather will I undertake this task than some difficulties should be caused by it; and I feel sure you will be discontented whatever the answer may be." Eiðr got to know this, as he was on a visit at his father's at Reykir. Skeggi and Eiðr (father and son) send a word to Thórðr, asking him to come to Reykir. Thórðr went, and his brothers with him. Skeggi greets Thórðr gladly. He received his greeting well, and asked, what was the meaning of his sending for him. Skeggi says: "That his kinsman, Ormr, wished to marry his sister Sigríðr." Thórðr says: "This is a strange negotiation on your part, for it seems to me that your kinsman, Ormr, is more possessed of wrath and foolishness than of luck, and it is not unlikely that it will soon be found to be so; or does he not know that the woman is betrothed to his brother?" Skeggi said: "Ormr is not at home, he has gone to the ship in Langidalr." Eiðr said: "That would I, my foster-father, that you could come to some terms for the sake of my father's pleading." "So it shall be as you wish," said Thórðr; "I will come to terms on account of your asking and the pleading of Skeggi; but none should I have come to if Ormr himself had wooed the woman." "This answer will I give you, Skeggi, as regards this case, that I shall break nothing which I have promised Ásbjörn. I will that Ormr go abroad this summer and stay for two winters, but that he

may expect to get the match if Ásbjörn did not return." Skeggi thought the answer very good, and they had witnesses as to this transaction. Thórðr and Eiðr rode home to Ós. Sigríðr gave little heed to this. Now, time passed until Ormr came home after having prepared his ship for sailing. Ormr asked what the result was with regard to the wooing of the woman. Skeggi told him all. Ormr thought that Skeggi had pushed this matter very lightly. Skeggi asked him to value the transaction as he pleased. Ormr requested him to have no thanks for the result, and became very angry; he said he should never care whether Thórðr liked it well or not, and that she should be his mistress. Skeggi said that he was a wonderfully unwise man to talk in such way. Ormr had not been at home for a few nights before he went to Ós, and began conversing with Sigríðr. She asked him not to do it, and said Thórðr would not care for it, adding: "You will soon find the mistake out if you do not stop it." Ormr said that in no way should he be unprepared against Thórðr, whatsoever they might try. She said: "You will find that out, if you frequent your visits hither; you must also expect, that I shall pay no attention to it as long as I hear nothing of your brother

Ásbjörn." They broke off the conversation. Thórðr was building a boat down by the mouth of the river, which he intended to send to the Strands for fish, and he was going with the boat himself. Ormr came for three successive days to Ós, and then Thórðr spoke to him, saying: "I request you, Ormr, not to frequent your visits hither to my dislike or to my sister's disgrace." To this Ormr gave a crossgrained answer, saying, that hitherto he had taken his own counsel as to his joumeyings despite of any man; and said he rather thought that so this time too the matter would have to stand. Thórðr said that they would not be likely both to stand upright, if he came there for the fourth time. Ormr left off his visits for several nights. Now Thórðr went on busying himself about his boat, and, when he had done, one morning, as the weather was fine, he proposed to have sail out of the river. At Ós, one of the handmaids, going into the house, said that now the weather was good for the washing of linen. Now Sigríðr was wont to wash her linen in the rivulet that passed the enclosure of Ós, and now took her linen there in company with the handmaid. This morning Ormr had an inkling of Thórðr's intention to sail away, and bade his horse be fetched without Skeggi's knowledge; whereupon he took his weapons and rode to Ós, and went to the very dean where Sigríðr was. He got off his horse and tied it up, laid aside his weapons, and went to Sigríðr, setting her down beside him, laying his head in her lap, and putting her hands round his head. She asked how he could take into his head to do such a thing as this?" For this is altogether against my will; or mindest thou not the last words of threats of my brother's, which he will be only too sure to keep, so you had better see to your affairs." He answers: "I am not going to be frightened at your wraiths." Now, when Ormr came into the dean, the handmaiden started off down to the ferry, and told Thórðr that Ormr had come to Sigríðr in the dean. Thórðr bestirred himself quickly, and took his sword and his shield, and ran up to the dean, where Ormr still lay in the lap of Sigríðr. Thórðr sprang at Ormr, and said: "Stand up, thou, and defend thyself; that is a manlier deed than to crouch up to women, and to sneak behind me." Ormr started up and stretched for his sword, and in the same moment Thórðr hewed at Ormr, and through his right arm. Then Ormr drew his sword, and, as he started about, his right leg broke, whereupon Thórðr hewed the head of Ormr, and went home to Ós, and there declared the manslaughter to have been done by his hand. Sigríðr bade her brother Thórðr save himself. He smiled at her word and said: "I shall go nowhere away, for I know no roads whereby to go; I shall send a messenger to Reykir, to tell Skeggi of the manslaughter of Ormr." She answers: "What a strange man thou art, brother, for surely Skeggi will speedily come here with many men to revenge his brother, and, stalwarth as thou art, thou hast no might to withstand him in such a strife." Thórðr said that he did not care for that. Thereupon he found his shepherd, and bade him go to Reykir and tell Skeggi of the manslaughter. He said he was unwilling to do so, but that he would go if he wished it. "Tell Skeggi also that he must have his fool removed." The youth went as he was ordered, and told Skeggi of the manslaughter of Ormr, his kinsman. Skeggi became very angry. The youth said: "Thórðr asked me to tell you that you must have your fool removed." Now Skeggi gathers men together, and rides to Ós. But Thórðr was at home with nine men, and when he sees Skeggi advancing, he prepares himself for defence. His two brothers were there, and

all the men were well armed. Thórðr says that in no way will he give way to Skeggi, adding, that now it would be well they tried their strength. It is to be said that this morning Eiðr had gone to his stud-horses in Linak-radalr; these Thórðr had given him. And when he heard of the murder of Ormr, he hurried home to Ós in order to be there before his father; and so he was. But when he came home he saw their preparations, took his weapons, and joined the party of Thórðr, his foster-father. Thórðr said: "I did not wish that you were at this meeting, for I shall no more spare your father than any one else if he should make an attack." Eiðr said: "By you shall I stand, my foster-father, whatever may happen, for the same fate shall be shared by us; thus I thought, when you saved my life, that I should unite yours with mine." Thórðr said: "Then you will assist me best when I need it mostly." When they had conversed together, then Skeggi came with many men. Skeggi was most wroth; and when he saw his son Eiðr one of Thórðr’s party, he stopped his men. Thórðr accosted Skeggi, and bade him attack, saying: "For now I am quite ready to hew the ox, though it be fat, as it is getting rather old." Then said Skeggi: "I shall not attack, for I will not fight against Eiðr, but you will be the cause of many crimes." Thórðr said: "I think it is more because of fright than mercy, if you do not attack." Skeggi answered nought, and rode away home. Ormr was buried in a how in Miðfjarðarnes.

Chapter 6

Now we have to name more men in the Saga. Thorvaldr hight a man; he was a good farmer, and lived in Langidalr at a farm called Engihlíð: he was a good leech, had two sons, one named Einarr, the other Bjarni. Indriði hight a man, a comrade of Ormr; he was a great man, a better fighter than any other person, but a most noble fellow. He had come to Iceland and landed in Kolbeinsárós. When this happened he was ready for sailing. Össurr hight a man, who dwelt in Skagafjörðr, at a farm called Grund; his father was Arngrimr and his mother Jorunn, who was sister to Miðfjarðar-Skeggi. Össurr was a great chief, for he had a "goðorð" at the upper part of Skagafjörðr, which reached towards the one of the sons of Hjalti. Össurr was overbearing, disliked, bigger and stronger than most men, faithless and guileful. Thormóðr hight a man, who lived at Miklibær in Óslandshlíð; his wife was Ólöf, a fine woman and a most noble character. Thórhallr was immensely rich; a champion he was never called, but rather a coward, and altogether a most mean man; he was boasting, and the greatest bragger, and thought he knew the best advice for everything. His wife Ólöf was the daughter of Hrolleifr, who was the one who took possession of Hrolleifsdalr, situate above Sléttahlíð. She was superior to them in every respect, and had been given to him in marriage for his wealth’s sake. She was young, but Thórhallr getting old. Ólöf was also a good leech. Kálfr hight a man in Hjaltadalr, who dwelt at Kálfastaðir; he was a good man of great consideration.

Chapter 7

Now we take up the story again at Ós, after Skeggi had had his kinsman, Ormr, buried. He sends a man north to Indriði, the fellow of Ormr, to tell him about the manslaughter, and asks him to prepare himself for a journey from the north, if he intends trying to revenge his comrade, for he had sworn brotherhood with Ormr ere they went to Iceland. Indriði made himself ready at once, and took his weapons. He had a helm and a red shield, a great barbed spear, and girt with a sharp sword. With him went two Eastmen and two Icelanders. Indriði rode from the ship as soon as he was ready. Now we begin the story again when Thórðr and Skeggi parted at Ós. Eiðr said then to Thórðr: "I do wish, my foster-father, that you would ride out of the district at present, but I will look after your farm while you are away." Thórðr said: "You shall have your way, but I do not care much for leaving my dwelling-place." "So it must be at present," said Eiðr, "for ill do I know my father’s contest, if he allow you to dwell so close to him for some time to come." Then Thórðr prepared himself from home; he took his weapons with him, shield, helm, sword, and spear. His brothers made themselves ready for the journey with him. "This I will not," said Thórðr, "for I wish not to lead you into any difficulties

with me, as you have had no share in the murders with me; stay, therefore, here with my foster-son, until you hear some further news." Then he mounted his horse, and bade all his people a farewell. Thereupon he rode up the mountain-ridge towards Linakradalr with one man as guide. He did not halt until he came to the farm Engihlíð, in Langidalr, late in the evening; he had a mask over the helm, and thus disguised himself. The sons of Thorvaldr thought they knew him, and told their father. "And if it be he, it means some news, that he goes disguised through the district." The farmer asked the great man his name, who said it was Thórðr. "And art thou Thórðr Terror?" He says: "So you may call me, if you like; I am the man." The farmer said: "What is the meaning of your journey?" Thórðr told him of the manslaughter of Ormr, and all the circumstances connected therewith. Thorvaldr said: "Great tidings do you bring: the manslaughter of Ormr, the kinsman of Skeggi, and many will the kinsmen be, who will make a common cause with Skeggi for a redress; but whither art thou riding now?" Thórðr said: "First I intend going north to a ship, which is at the mouth of the river Kolbeinsá, whatever may then take place." Thorvaldr offered him his son Einarr as guide, as the way was unknown to Thórðr. Einarr was to guide him north over Vatnsskarð to a place,

where the roads divided. Thórðr thanked him, drew a gold ring off his hand and gave to Thorvaldr. The good man thanked him for the gift, and asked him to call on him, if he would. "My mind tells me that during this journey you will be tried as to your skill in arms and your valour; you may expect that Össurr, the kinsman of Ormr, will waylay you, when he gets to know, for he is a great chief and an overbearing man." Thórðr said: "What the fate had destined would have to come to pass; but unless the tokens of my family fetches are greatly at fault, I am minded to think that some of Ormr’s kinsmen may have to lose their life at my hand, or ever my nose has done breathing; well do you act, my good man, and have my thanks, but I will accept your friendship, should I ever be in need." Then Thórðr rode away and Einarr with him; Thórðr and Thorvaldr parted in good friendship; and now they went up Langi-dalr and north towards Vatnsskarð; when they came out of the pass they disagreed as to the road. Thórðr would ride over Grindarhólar, and he had his own will; they ride to Arnarstapi, and baited there. Thórðr said he was sleepy, and that some fetches of enemies were pursuing him.

Now we come to the story when Indriði heard of the murder of his comrade, Ormr. He rode from the ship and four men with him, two were Norse-men; was the one hight Sigurðr, the other Thorgrimr, but both most brave fellows. The other two were Icelanders; the one hight Bárðr, the other Thorfinnr. They were both great and strong, and were all well armed. They took the usual road from Skagafjörðr up to the Vatnsskarð this same day that Thórðr rode through the pass. Thórðr and his guide now saw where five men rode with weapons. Thórðr asked his guide if he knew any of them. He said: "Much am I mistaken if that is not Indriði master, the foster-brother of Ormr, with the red shield and a great barbed spear in his hand." Thórðr answers: "May be that Indriði wants to meet me, but what help can I expect from you?" He said: "I am not a fighting man, and I cannot stand to see human blood, but it is very bad should you lose your life through them." Thórðr said, that it was uncertain who that night would be the commander over Indriði’s ship. Thereupon Thórðr prepared himself for defence, but said it was a great drawback that his guide was so fainthearted. Now when they met, Indriði inquired what delayed Ormr. Thórðr spake, and said that Ormr had bought for himself property in Miðfjörðrnes. Then he told him the manslaughter --" And avenge him now, for thou wilt not have a better chance of me again than thou hast now." Said Indriði: "Let it be so then." Whereupon they all set on Thórðr. Sigurðr the Eastman aimed a thrust at him with a spear, which, striking the shield, glanced off it down into the ground. He stooped after the thrust, and Thórðr, seeing that, dealt him a blow, which striking Sigurðr amidmost cut him in twain above the hips. At this nick of time Thorfinnr dealt a blow at Thórðr and struck the shield and chopped a large slice thereof. Thórðr hewed at the leg of Thorfinnr above the knee, and forthwith cut it off. Then he challenged Indriði to make a brisker onset of it, "if thou hast a will to avenge thy comrade." Indriði made a leap at Thórðr and made an eager onslaught on him, and long they fought, and the end of it was, that Indriði fell before Thórðr, all slit up with yawning wounds. Then leapt Thórðr upon the companions of Indriði, and after an assault at arms, brief

and swift, Thórðr finished by slaughtering both. After this he sat him down, and bound up his wounds, for many a one he had got and great. He then went up to Indriði, and asked if he stood to healing. He answered: "Belike, if leeches be fetched." Then Thórðr took hold of Indriði, pulled him out of his blood and put him on his nag. Whereupon he mounted his own horse and rode west into Bolstaðahlíð and there gave out what had befallen, and rode on with Indriði unto Engihlíð. Thorvaldr gave a good welcome to Thórðr, and offered him every cheer that he would accept, and asked him for tidings. He told him of the fight at Arnarstapi and the death of five men. "But therefore have I here come, that I wish that you would heal Indriði, for never was there a braver man." Thorvaldr said that was no more than his duty. He received Indriði, made him a tub-bath, and cleansed his wounds, none of which, however, were deadly. Thorvaldr offered to cure Thórðr, but he would not, and said: "I am going to the north, whatever may befall me." Indriði said: "Now have I, as you know, tried to avenge Ormr’s manslaughter upon Thórðr, but thus it turned out that four of my companions fell before him, and I myself deadly wounded, and the result of my fight with Thórðr ended as might be expected, for he is not like any one as regards skill in arms. But now it is my counsel, Thórðr, that you ride north to my ship and wait me there. Olöf is the name of the mistress at Miklibær; she is a great lady and one of the best of leeches; ask her to receive you, until I come to the north, and she will heal your wounds. Össurr hight a good man, who lives at Þverá in Skagafjörðr; he is a kinsman of Ormr, whom you slew, and will be sure to waylay you." Thórðr bade him have his thanks for his good advice. "But I shall go my way in spite of Össurr, as I have determined." After this Thórðr rode northward through the pass to Skagafjörðr and straight to the ship. He came to Miklibær in the evening, found the good man, who asked him his name. Thórðr gave it him. Thor-hallr said: "Often have I heard you mentioned, but what is the reason for coming here?" Thórðr told him of the meeting with Indriði, and of the manslaughters.

Thórhallr said that he was a great hero: "But so it seems to me as if you are severely wounded." Thórðr said the wounds were of very little consequence, but that he only had some few scratches. At this moment the good wife came out and said: "Who is this great man just come?" Thórðr gave his name. She said she had often heard him talked of, bade him dismount, and dwell there for the night. Thórðr thanked the good woman. Thórhallr said: "Dangerous seems it to me to receive this man, who has been implicated in so many slaughters, is himself greatly wounded, and needs cure; there are also great men who will pursue him and avenge Ormr; and I think that he who renders him any help neither will take care of his goods nor life." Then says the mistress: "In this matter we do not think one way; I think that one who helps him will get the best of it; I therefore invite you, Thórðr, to stay here as long as you like; I will bind up your wounds and heal you, if it be possible." Thórðr thanked her, and said he would accept the offer, if her goodman would consent thereto. Thórhallr said, once more, "As you are wont, you will have your own way; I will promise Thórðr to be faithful to him in all things, but I must hold my tongue as to his dwelling here." Then Thórðr dismounted, and the good wife took him to an outhouse, while the good man unsaddled his horse. The good woman laid out a table before Thórðr, and he commenced his meal. After that she made him a tub-bath, and cleansed his wounds, which were both many and great. Thórðr dwelt at Miklibær in concealment until he was healed from all his wounds. Then Thórðr spoke to the good man Thórhallr and his mistress: "It has now come to this, that I am healed from all my wounds, and I will no longer keep disguised, or be here longer than you wish." The mistress said: "It is my will that you be here until this case in one way or another is settled." Thórhallr said: "This I will, that Thórðr be here this winter; still I have been told that Össurr at Þverá intends having his revenge upon you." Thórðr said: "I do not mind that, but uncertain it is which of us two would be the one to lay the stone over the other’s head." One day rode Thórðr to the ship, which lay out by Elinarholmr, and at the same time Indriði came there. The sailors had made the ship ready whilst Indriði was at Engihlíð. Indriði invited Thórðr to go with him abroad, but said he could not take him to Norway because of Ormr’s kinsmen, who were both mighty and rich; "but I have come to terms on your behalf as to all the manslaughters done at our meeting, for I have paid weregild out of my money." Thórðr thanked him for all this, and drew a gold ring off his hand and gave him; but he did not think he would go abroad for the present. After this they parted friendly. Indriði went

abroad, and is now out of the Saga. Thórðr rode to Miklibær. Thórhallr received him very well, and said: "Glad am I you did not go abroad; you have dwelt here now for some time, and I like you well; I know also that my wife wishes that you dwell here as long as you like; I am without children, and it is well to make such men one’s friends, and help them with money, even if there should be a flaw in their affairs. I am neither in want of courage, nor of intellect to give good counsel if Össurr should commence hostility against you." Thórðr was pleased with this; but then said the wife: "I do not wish, Thórðr, that you should put much faith in Thórhallr’s wisdom or help, but I think it would be well that you would try for once his courage should you need it." Thórðr dwells with Thórhallr during the winter.

Chapter 8

Ketill hight a farmer, who lived within Ósland; he had given Thórðr a good horse called Sviðgrímr, after which Sviðgrímshólar have taken their name. The farmer Kálfr, at Kálfstaðir, invited Thórðr and Thórhallr to a Yule feast, and Thórðr accepted the invitation, but before they rode from home, the housewife said to Thórðr: "I wish you to be cautious, for Össurr at Þverá is waylaying you; he has made a vow to avenge his kinsman Ormr." Then said Thórhallr: "Rely you may upon this, my goodwife, that we are not lost, neither for good plans nor valour, even if we have to try, although there is some difference in strength, and not a very small one either." The housewife said: "May your self-praise never thrive; and I advise you, Thórðr, that you do not trust to the valour of Thórhallr." Thórðr says: "He will prove himself good." Thereupon they rode to Kálfstaðir and were received well; the Yule feast was a good one. Now it is to be said about Össurr of Þverá, that he keeps spies for the purpose of finding out about Thórðr’s journey, when he be likely to leave after the Yule feast. He gathers together men, and on the night before the last day in Yule he rides to Hjaltadalr, and eighteen men with him; he halted near the farm of Viðvik in a small dale called Garðshvammr. Early in the morning after Yule, Thórðr bade his men prepare themselves for returning home, and said, that many things had passed before him during the night. Goodman Kálfr asked, what he had dreamt. "I dreamt," he says, "that we comrades were riding up Hjaltadalr; and when we came nigh Viðvik, there sprang up before us eighteen wolves; one of them was the biggest and ran at me with open mouth, and attacked me and my men; methought they bit my men to death, but I thought that I killed many of the wolves, and the biggest one I thought I wounded, and then I woke." Farmer Kálfr thought this signified hostilities, and said: "This means evil-minded men," and bade him stay the day over, and let spies go down to Viðvik. Thórðr would not. "Then I will," said Kálfr, "give you some more men to increase your company.’" Thórðr said: "Never shall it get abroad that Thórðr ’Terror’ is frightened at mere dreams and increases his company because that he, for this reason, dare not go through the county." They now rode from Kálfstaðir, seven altogether, Thórðr and Thórhallr and five men-servants. The farmer Kálfr gave Thórðr one of his house-carls for accompanying him; his name was Hallr, and a strong man he was. Eyvindr hight a man, who lived at Ás in Hjaltadalr; he had been at Kálfstaðir during Yule; he had given Thórðr a spear inlaid with gold, and promised him his assistance whenever he was in want of men. Eyvindr went with Thórðr; they went down the dale, and not very far, before a man met them; this man had been sent by Kálfr to spy, and he informed them, that no fewer than eighteen men were waylaying them down in Garðshvammr. Thórhallr asked who they were. He said that Össurr of Þverá was the leader. Thórðr said, that here was an opportunity to try men’s alacrity and skill in arms. Thórhallr said: "It is not wise to go and meet them with so many odds against us, but I will give you my counsel." "And what may that be?" says Thórðr. Thórhallr says: "Let us turn here over to the tongue, thence into Kolbeinsdalr and then home, that they may not become aware of us." Thórðr says: "Small odds against us it seems to me, if they are eighteen and we nine; I know, that often have men fared well against such odds; and not would my kinsman Hörða-Kári have fled, even had it been more odds, and so much methinks I take after him, and other noble kinsmen of mine, as not to run away before we have tried. Now will I go and meet Össurr, whatever may happen, but thou,

Thórhallr, shalt not be at this meeting; I will not reward your wife or yourself for your well-doing by having you in any life’s danger." Thórhallr bade him have his own way, but said: "My enemies will say that I leave you unmanfully." Thórðr also requested Eyvindr to ride home, but he said: "Badly should I keep comradeship with a brave fellow as you, if I were to run away from you at the moment you need me most; it shall never come to pass that such shame had befallen me." Thereupon they go to the place from where they could see Össurr sit in ambush. Thórðr said: "Let us turn up the slope yonder nigh by; there is a good stronghold." They did so, and broke up some stones there. When Össurr and his men saw this, they ran up the slope. Thórðr asked: "Who are these that behave so hostile?" Össurr gave his name and said: "Is it Thórðr Terror standing there on the hill?" He answered: "That is the man, and the best for you to do is to avenge your kinsman Ormr, if there be any valour in you, for you have got odds enough against us." Össurr bade his men attack. There was a hard fight. Thórðr soon did for one of them. Thórðr and his men let stones fly at Össurr’s men thick and fast, but they defended themselves with shields. Some of Össurr’s men fell while the stones lasted. Thereupon Thórðr and his men ran down the slope and then commenced the slaughter. A man named Örn hewed at Thórðr while he turned his face, and hit him on the leg, for a man attacked him in the front; his name was Hafthorr, a kinsman of Össurr. But when Thórðr received the blow, he turned round, and with one hand struck the other man with his sword in the middle, and split him in twain. The second blow he dealt Hafthórr, which hit him in the shoulder and cut the arm from his side, and he fell dead to the ground. Now Thórðr had killed three men, and when Óssurr saw this, he bade his men advance. He, with five men, attacked Thórðr, and the others Thórðr’s men. But the result of this fight was, that Thórðr killed six men, and wounded Össurr so severely, that he was unable to fight. Of Össurr’s men fell nine, and five of Thórðr’s. After the fight Thórðr went up to Össurr and dragged him out of the blood, and covered him with a shield, so that ravens should not tear him, for he could in no way help himself. All Össurr’s men fled. Thórðr’s men were not able to pursue them, for none escaped unwounded from this meeting. Thórðr offered Össurr to have him cured, but Össurr said: "You need not offer me cure, for as soon as I have an opportunity I shall kill you."

Thórðr said he did not care for that, and sent Thórhallr over to Ás to Thorgrimr, who lived there, with a message that he wished him to come and fetch Össurr and heal him. He did so, and brought him home; he was long laid up of his wounds, but at length became healed. Cairns were made over the bodies of the men who fell. After the meeting at Garðshvammr, Thórðr went home with Thórhallr; he had received many wounds, but none deadly. Ólöf asked Thórðr about the meeting, and he told her all what had passed. She said: "These are great tidings;" she healed Thórðr; but the winter passed over without any tidings of importance.

Chapter 9

In the spring Thórðr rode up into the district, for a farmer, by name of Thorgrimr, had sent him word to build up his hall, as Thórðr was the most handy of men. Thorgrimr dwelt at Flatatunga; that farm is in the upper part of Skagafjörðr. Thórðr was busy building the hall during summer, and, when he had nearly finished, a ship from the ocean arrived at Gasir in Eyjafjörðr. Thórðr said to the good man that he would ride to the ship and buy the timber that he thought was most needed. The farmer bade him have his own way, and gave him three house-carls to bring home the timber. Thereupon they went northwards, and stayed at the market as long as they wanted, and brought from the north timber on many horses. Thórðr rode with them and was fully armed. He had a helm, a shield, was girt with a sword and the good spear. They went over Hörgárdalr-heiði down Norðrárdalr, then over the river above the farm Egilsá, and down the banks. Then they see twelve men start up before them with weapons. These were Össurr and his men of Þverá. Thórðr at once jumped off his horse and put his shield before him. His companions immediately show much bravery, dismount, and draw their swords. Thórðr bade them not place themselves in any life’s danger. They said that he who stood by should

never thrive while he wanted men. Then said Thórðr to Össurr: "You have not left off yet to lie in wait for me; I thought our last meeting was memorable enough, but you will not fare any better than last time before we part." Össurr answered: "I told you I should never be faithful to you, if my life were spared, and this vow I shall fulfil. Let us now attack him, and avail ourselves of our greater strength." Thórðr says: "Yet have I not given up all hope. It seems to me uncertain what you could do, even if I be by myself, but more uncertain now that these men follow me." Then Thórðr ran forth against Össurr and thrust his spear through the man who stood foremost. Thórðr said: "There is one gone, and not unlikely another will follow." Össurr with six men now attack Thórðr; but four of Össurr's followers assailed the companions of Thórðr, resulting in the falling of them all. But with regard to the fight between Thórðr and Össurr, there is to be said, that Thórðr killed four of Össurr's men, and inflicted upon Össurr himself many wounds. Now we come to where the herdsman of the good man Thorgrimr sees the fight from the hill, and thinks he knows who the men are; he is also aware that Thórðr wants men; he runs, therefore, home to Flatatunga and tells the good man of the strife, and asks him to hasten to help Thórðr. The good man started off quickly, and rode up the banks with nine men. When Össurr sees the men coming, he hastens to his horse, mounts it with great difficulty, and rides away as fast as he can, until he comes to Þverá, much dissatisfied with his journey. He had lost his men, and was himself much wounded The three men of Thórðr who fell were buried on the banks where the fight took place. Thorgrimr, the farmer, asked Thórðr what news there was; and Thórðr told him. Thórðr now dwelt at Flatatunga and finished the building of the hall, which was a wonderfully strong house. (This hall stood until the time that Bishop Egill was at Holar, 1331-41.) And when Thórðr was going away, Thorgrimr, the farmer, accompanied him with nine men, and they all rode down Skagafjörðr. When Össurr saw them, he thought he had not strength enough to follow them. They continue their journey until they come to Miklibær in Óslands-hlíð. Thórhallr received him well, but the good wife better. Thorgrimr rode home, and he and Thórðr parted good friends. Thórðr became very famous all over the country. This heard Miðfjarðar-Skeggi, and pretended not to know what was going on between his kinsman Össurr and Thórðr.

Now Thórðr sat at rest nearly to Yule. It so happened that, one morning before Yule, Thórðr wished to go and see his horse, Sviðgrímr, a-grazing in the walks with four mares. Thórhallr asked Thórðr to wait, and rather go three nights later, "when I want to bring hay from my stack-yards." Thórðr bade him have his own way; "but I shall not be taken by surprise even if it comes to an encounter." Thórhallr answered: "Nay, to some odds we should not give in." Thórðr smiled at his words, and said: "So it would be, if you stood by my side." The housewife said: "May your self-praise never thrive; I thought Thórðr received little assistance from you at the last encounter you had, and badly is that woman married who has got you for a husband, for you are as boastful as you are faint-hearted." Thórðr said: "That is not so; Thórhallr is not a man of dash; he is wary, but let it come to a trial, and he will show himself the smartest of warriors." Says Thórhallr: "You need not, my good wife, be so hard spoken, for I do not intend to draw back for one, if we are equally well armed." They now left off their conversation. During their talk a vagrant was present; he took to his heels, and came in the evening to Þverá. Össurr asked him for tidings. He says he has no news to tell. "But at Miklibær in Óslandshlíð slept I last night." Össurr said: "What was the hero, Thórðr the Terror, doing?" The boy said: "Certainly can you call him a hero, considering how disgracefully you have fared before him; but nothing did I see him do, except to rivet the clinch of his sword. But this I heard Thórhallr say, that they intended fetching hay from the stack-yards within three nights." Össurr says: "How many men are they likely to muster?" The boy answers: "No more than Thórðr, and Eyvindr, and Thórhallr." "Well do you say, my boy," says Össurr. Thereupon he got twelve men to follow him, and they

all rode to Óslandshlíð. This same morning Thórðr, Eyvindr, and Thórhallr rode from home. Thórðr asked Eyvindr to take his weapons with him, and said: "That would not be in vain." He did so. They rode out to Sviðgrímshólar. Then said Thórðr: "My wish is, Thórhallr, that you stay here behind; but Eyvindr and I will go to look for the horses upon the hill." Thórhallr bade him have his own way. They

went up the hill, which in many places was covered with hard snow. Össurr with his twelve men came up to the stack-yard, and made a ring around Thórhallr, drawing their weapons, and bade the rascal tell where Thórðr was. Thórhallr was awfully frightened, and sank down by the wall, and said that Thórðr had gone up the slope with another man. Össurr said: "Bad to have a thrall for a bosom-friend," and struck him with the back of his axe, so that he lay in a swoon. Then said Thórðr to Eyvindr: "There are men coming from down below up the hill, and I know them well. It is Össurr who is there, and once more wants to fight me. Now we will try to get to Skeggjahamar, and thence to Sviðgrímshólar, where there is a good stand." Eyvindr answers: "Easy it is to get upon the crag;" and so up they got; but in the same moment Össurr and his men came up to the rock Thórðr goes right out to the edge of the crag. A mass of snow lay on it, and right down to the bottom, and it was awfully steep. It was the greatest danger possible to go down; but they put their spears between their legs, and thus slid right down all the way on to Sviðgrímshólar. Össurr and his men soon were there. Thórðr said: "Much eagerness do you display in trying to have my life, Össurr; it would not be a bad job if you did suffer for it, nor shall we both of us go away from this meeting alive." Össurr said that it was just what he had intended, that Thórðr should not escape any longer. Thereupon they attacked Thórðr and Eyvindr. Thórðr threw a spear at Össurr, but one of his men in the same moment ran before him, and the spear flew right through him. One man hewed at Thórðr, but he put up his shield, and the blow hit it, so he was not wounded. Thórðr smote at this man, and dealt him a death-blow. He struck another, the blow came on the neck, and the sword ran down into the breast, and he fell dead to the ground. The third he pierced through with his sword, and Eyvindr killed the fourth. Össurr now made an attack with great vehemence, and again fell two of his men, but Eyvindr also became wounded. He was much exhausted through the loss of blood, and sat himself down, and was very weary. Then six men attacked Thórðr, but in such way did he defend himself that no one was able to inflict a wound upon him. Then Thórðr said to Össurr: "Difficult seems the attack for six men, and certainly I should not wish to be called these men’s foreman, and use them only as a shield to-day; now you ought rather to make an attack and avenge your kinsman Ormr, and all the disasters you have met with at my hands." Össurr now became exceedingly enraged at the whole affair, both because of Thórðr’s provoking language as well as on account of the hatred he bore him. He now runs up to him, and hews with both hands at Thórðr. The sword hit the shield, and took a good slice off it. At the same moment Thórðr hewed at Össurr, and the blow struck him below the left armpit, slicing the flesh along the spine so as, at last, to sever it from the ribs, whereupon the sword flew into the hollow of the body, and Össurr fell dead down on the spot. Össurr’s companions, who were alive, ran away, and related the manslaughter of Össurr. Thórðr had Eyvindr brought home; he was much wounded, and was laid up for a long time, but was healed at last. A cairn was cast up over Össurr. Thórðr narrated at Miklibær the manslaughter of Össurr.

Olöf was much displeased with Thórhallr for having told where Thórðr was, and so much so, that she for this reason was almost going to be separated from him. Thórðr laid himself out to smooth matters between them, and said it was not to be wondered at that he should try to save his life, since from Össurr there was nothing but evil to be looked for. So time wore away past Yule tide, that no tidings came to pass, and Thórðr kept quiet at home.

Chapter 10

Now it is to be told that Miðfjarðar-Skeggi heard from the north the news of the fall of his kinsman Össurr, and thought that Thórðr had dealt a blow close enough to him, and filled with a mighty wrath against him, though he let it out to no man, because he did not desire that his son Eiðr, or the brothers of Thórðr, should have any misgivings as to what he was about until he should come forward openly. Secretly he had twelve of his horses stabled, with a view to riding at Thórðr after Yule. And secretly he rode away from his home at Reykir with a band of twelve men; and riding north through Vatnsskarð and down through Hegranes, and out along the country-side, they arrived, shortly before

dawn of day, at Miklibær. The moon shone bright. They rapped hard at the door, and out there came a man, who asked who the new-comers might be. Skeggi told him who he was, and asked if Thórðr the Terror were there. The man answered: "What wilt thou with him?" He answered: "Ask him whether he will abide the blows of Sköfnungr outside or in." And when the message came in as to on what errand Skeggi had come there, Thórðr stood up and seized his weapons. Then spake Ólöf, the housewife: "Stand up, men, to arms, and defend ye a brave man, for here are many stalwarth fellows among you, and take care that Skeggi's journey hither come to a disgraceful close." Then answered Thórhallr: "I forbid every man of my household to join in an onset on Skeggi; let no one dare to cover my house with shame in thus dealing with a chieftain of another district." Answered the housewife: "Long enough did I know that at weapons you were as worthless, as in deed you have no heart in matters of manhood." Answered Thórðr: "The head shall rule in the house, good wife," and went out to the door. Skeggi charged him to step forth, so as to have room to strike out. "I shall step out," said Thórðr, "on condition that I may accompany you to the spot where I slew your kinsman

Össurr; for in that manner your memory may serve you as to what 'family blow' I have dealt you." Skeggi said: "Be sure that your biting words will stand thee in no stead, but I deem it well enough that on the spot the revenge be wrought." Thereupon went Thórðr with them to the place where Össurr had been buried, and they walked round the cairn. Skeggi then drew his sword, Sköfnungr, and said: "On this spot no one is justified to kill Thórðr but me." Thórðr drew his sword and said: "You cannot expect, Skeggi, that I shall stand quiet before your blows while I am unbound." At this moment eighteen men ran at them, all with drawn swords. Thither had come Eiðr, Eyjulfr, and Steingrímrr, the brothers of Thórðr. Eiðr asked if Thórðr were alive. Thórðr said that death was not near him. They all dismounted. Eiðr offered his father two conditions to choose between -- either to make peace with Thórðr, so that he might ride home to Ós, and stay there in quietness, or that he (Eiðr) should help his foster-father and fight for him. Skeggi says: "Long ago should I have killed Thórðr, had I seen an opportunity, if I had not found that you value more, Eiðr, having been brought up by Thórðr, than kinship with me." Eiðr said Thórðr was deserving of it all, and that Thórðr had not committed any murders but in self-defence, with the exception of the murder of Ormr, and that was excusable. Skeggi answered: "It seems most likely that you will have your own way, for I should not fight against you." After this, Skeggi rides to Miklibær in the night, walks in with drawn sword to Thórhallr's bedstead, and bade the housewife to get up, and said that she had too long submitted to this dastard. She did so, but asked that Thórhallr might be spared. He said that this rascal had lived long enough. Thereupon he took him by the hair, dragged him to the bedside, hewed his head off, and said: "Sooner by a great deal would I sheath Sköfnungr in thine than Thórðr's blood, for in him to lose his life there would be a great loss, but in thee there is none at all, and now I have atoned Sköf-nungr for being drawn." Skeggi rode now away home to Reykir, and was by no means pleased with his journey. Thórðr and Eiðr arrived at Mik-libær just at the time Skeggi was riding away. Ólöf told them of the murder of Thórhallr. Eiðr said that less than this he could not have expected, for his father had been extremely wroth when they parted. Olöf bade them stay there as long as they wished. Eiðr said that her offer was generous, and they stayed there for a week and rested their horses. Then they prepared themselves to go away. Thórðr went to Ólöf and said: "This I beg of you, that you do not marry again within two winters, if you hear I am alive, for you are the woman who would be likely to win my affection." She answered thus: "This I will promise you, for I do not expect a better offer of marriage than this." They now ride west to Miðfjörðr and home to Ós. Eyvindr went with Thórðr, but left a man to manage his farm; because he would not leave Thórðr while he was not reconciled as to his manslaughters. Now the winter passed over, and all was quiet.

Chapter 11

Now it is said, that a ship came across the ocean to Blönduós; with it came Ásbjörn skipper, kinsman of Skeggi. Skeggi rides to the ship and bids Ásbjörn home with him. They went to Reykir eighteen together. Ásbjörn was not in good spirits during the winter. Thórðr the Terror dwelt at home at Ós, and had many brave fellows with him, amongst them Eiðr with eight men. Ásbjörn had been but a short time at Reykir, when he told Skeggi what his intention was with regard to the affairs between him and Thórðr, and said it was sad to have no atonement for the slaughter of his brother, Ormr, while he had strength enough for revenge. Skeggi said this was a difficult case: "because Eiðr is always on Thórðr's side, and may not clearly see which side may prevail in end in the dealings I have on hand with the men of Ós," and so they dropped their talk. This very summer a ship arrived in White River in Borgarfjörðr. Men rode to the market from the northern districts, both from Miðfjörðr and other places. Thórðr the Terror rode to the ship with eleven men, all well armed. Both his brothers, Eyjulfr and Steingrímrr, were of the company. It was said that he intended to ride up along the Borgarfjörðr on his errands, but from the south over Arnarvatnsheiði. Skeggi heard of this, and prepares himself secretly to start from home with seventeen men ; so that Eiðr did not know, intending to waylay Thórðr on his return from the south. Ásbjörn was one amongst them. They ride north over the ridge to Viðidalr, south of all habitations, then south over the heath, where the roads divide, and slants down towards Viðidalr. A man went with Skeggi, hight Thorbjörn, and was called the Paltry; he lived on some land belonging to Skeggi, and had become his client; he was very wealthy, but he was so stingy, that he grudged using his wealth himself or giving it to others, and for this reason he was called "the Paltry." He had few people by him except his wife. Eiðr had gone out to Miðfjarðarnes, to look after the house of a man named Thorbjörn, and who was called the Puny. He was the client of Thórðr the Terror, and had gone with him; he possessed a quantity of live-stock of all kinds; he lived on the northern part of Miðfjarðarnes, and his sheep went self-feeding about the woods. Thórðr had as much of his money as he wished for. Eiðr dwelt there for a few nights, and then he rode home to Ós, and ascertained what was going on. He collected some men and rode with fourteen men south on to the heath after his father. Now there is to be said that Thórðr was at the market as long as he wanted, and when he was ready, he rode up the Borgarfjörðr, and north on to the heath so far, that he could see the ambush. Thórðr said: "What men do you know here?" Eyjulfr says: "I do not know for certain, but I think most likely Skeggi." Thórðr said: "Long do they persevere lying in wait for me, but although there is a vast difference in strength, yet they shall find resistance." They then rode against them with drawn swords. Skeggi then started up and said: "Ásbjörn, my kinsman, let us now attack them, and let them feel the superiority of our power, and avenge now your brother, Ormr." "So it shall be," says Ásbjörn. Thórðr answered: "There is many a slip 'tween cup and lip."

They then attacked Thórðr and his men. Thórðr cast a spear at Skeggi and aimed it at his middle, but a man ran before him, hight Halldórr, who was a near kinsman of Skeggi. The spear hit him in the middle and went through him, and into the breast of another man, who stood behind him, and they both fell down dead. The third he struck on the neck with the sword in such a manner that the head flew off. Now the attack became the strongest. Thórðr and Skeggi fought the best part of the day in such a way, that nothing was gained on either side. Eyjúlfr and Ásbjörn fought furiously, and it could not be foreseen which of them would gain the victory; they inflicted on each other great wounds. Steingrímrr fought very boldly and killed four men. The fighting now changed thus, that Steingrímrr was against Skeggi; but Thórðr with his men fought against Skeggi's, and killed five of them. The namesakes, Thorbjörn the Paltry and Thorbjörn the Puny fought one another with great vehemence, and the result was, that both fell dead. This very moment Eiðr burst forth with his fifteen men. Eiðr there and then dismounted, went between them, and parted them. Skeggi was very wroth, rode home to Reykir and Ásbjörn with him, but they were anything but pleased with their journey. Ásbjörn was laid up for a long time from his wounds, but at last was healed. Thórðr and Eiðr rode home to Ós after the

meeting. Thirteen of Skeggi's men fell in the fight, but seven of Thórðr's. Now both parties kept quiet, and the winter wore on. It happened one day, that Eiðr rode to Reykir with nine men. His father received him well. Eiðr said that he wanted to make peace. Skeggi replied, that there was time enough for that, "and stay here for the rest of the winter." Eiðr said that so it should be. There was a great deal of coolness between Eiðr and Ásbjörn during the winter. Eiðr had a suspicion, from the talk of Skeggi and Ásbjörn, that they were seeking the life of Thórðr, his foster-father: he therefore sent Thórðr word, and told him to be on the look-out.

Chapter 12

It so happened once during the winter, that Eiðr became aware of his father riding from home secretly and going up the district; he felt sure that his father meant some great undertaking; he therefore rode after him with nine men. They met up by Krdksmelar. Skeggi asked Eiðr where he intended going. Eiðr says: "I was minded to fill your flock, my father." Says Skeggi: "Your intention is good, my kinsman, but I am going home, because I am unwell." "May be," said Eiðr, "but I will ride to Torfastaðir, for I have an errand there." Then they parted. Ásbjörn, and six men with him, had gone the same day to the baths. Now there is to be said about Thórðr the Terror, that he woke up this same morning, and said to his brothers: "Thus my dreams have told me, that Miðfjarðar-Skeggi and Ásbjörn are seeking my life; I shall therefore leave home to-day, and cast about for some catch or another, if an opportunity should offer, for I will no longer have the two, Ásbjörn and Skeggi, over my head. Let us go seven together, my brothers and Eyvindr and three other men." Thereupon they take their weapons and ride to Reykir. Ásbjörn was going from the bath just that moment, and saw the men riding. Ásbjörn spoke to his men and said: "There goes Thórðr the Terror, and seems unruly, and I suppose he wants me; let us therefore turn up on the hill and wait there." They did so. Now Thórðr approached and commenced fighting at once; both fought most vigorously, for there was no difference in strength. Thórðr became quickly a man-slayer. Three men fell there of Ásbjorn's men, but one of Thórðr's. Then Thórðr attacked Ásbjörn and inflicted several wounds upon him, and he was nearly unfit for fighting. At this very moment Skeggi appeared with his sword, Sköfnungr, drawn; he said to Ásbjörn: "Why do you not flee, poor fellow?" Ásbjörn sat himself down, for he was much exhausted because of the loss of blood. Skeggi hewed at Thórðr and hit him in the shoulder, inflicting on him a yawning wound. At the nick of time Eiðr came there with nine men; he ran at once between them, and said that they should not fight any longer: he said also that he should kill Ásbjörn, except that he alone was given permission to settle affairs. Ásbjörn said: "My errand to the country was, to fetch my betrothed; but when I heard of my brother's slaughter, I made the resolution to avenge him; but our fighting has become such, that I prefer peace with Thórðr." Thórðr answered: "I will grant my foster-son the honour of settling this case, but otherwise I do not care for any peace. The play might go on in the same way as it has gone before." The result, however, was, that they came to terms, and Eiðr was to decide as to all their charges and manslaughters. Thórðr, Asbjörn, and Skeggi all of them joined hands. Thórðr's hand swelled. Eiðr cut from the wound the flesh where the edge of the sword had touched. Now Eiðr summoned a district meeting. They were all present, Skeggi, Ásbjörn, and Thórðr. Then Eiðr made the following agreement between them. "This is my verdict," said Eiðr, "that for the manslaughter of Össurr I make two hundred silvers; the third hundred will be dropped on account of the plot against Thórðr's life and all other hostilities; all Össurr's men shall be unholy because of their attack on Thórðr; but for the manslaughter of Ormr I make two hundred silvers, and for the wound my father inflicted upon Thórðr I give a hundred silvers; thereupon shall Ásbjörn have Sigríðr, as had been decided from the first, and Thórðr shall have the wedding at his house. Here is also one hundred in silver, Ásbjörn, that I and my foster-father will give you as weregild for your kinsman." All thanked Eiðr; Skeggi was not much satisfied, but said that he should keep peace and truce. Thórðr thanked his foster-son for his verdict; "but I will not have the hundred silvers, which you awarded me; Skeggi shall not pay this money, for neither would my father, Thórðr, nor Hörða-Kári, have taken a bribe for their

body, therefore I shall not do so." This won great approbation, and

Thórðr had great honour of his speech. Now Thórðr prepared for the wedding, and invites many guests. And in the evening Ei’Sr showed the guests to their seats. Skeggi occupied the first high seat on the upper bench, and Thórðr sat next to him; but opposite Skeggi, in the second high seat, sat Ásbjörn, the bridegroom, and next to him Eiðr. The bridesmaids occupied the cross-benches in the upper part of the hall. All were well entertained during the evening, and all seemed merry except Skeggi; he was rather frowning. In the evening the guests went to sleep, but in the morning went to the banquet as was customary. Skeggi was in an angry mood, and fell asleep at the table; he had put his sword, Sköfnungr, at his back. Thórðr was much displeased that Skeggi was so gloomy at the banquet; he therefore took the sword, Sköfnungr, and drew it. Eiðr said: "This is useless, my foster-father." Thórðr answers: "What has that to do with the case?" Eiðr says: "It is the nature of the sword, that something must be hewed with it each time it is drawn." Thórðr says: "That shall be tried," and ran out, and said that it should gnaw horsebones, and hewed at a mare, which stood in the homefield. Eiðr said that it was sad that this had happened. Now Skeggi wakes, and misses both the sword and Thórðr; he became wroth and ran out, and asked if Thórðr had taken the sword. Eiðr says: "I am the cause of Thórðr hewing the mare, because I told him the nature of the sword." Thórðr said that he himself was the cause of it. Then Skeggi, very wroth, said: "I will now, that we try our strength." Thórðr said, that he was quite ready. Eiðr and Ásbjörn went between, so they did not get near enough one another to have a fight. Then said Thórðr: "As they do not wish, that we should try each other’s strength, I consider it most proper that Skeggi alone should make the conditions of peace, if he thinks that any disgrace has been done him." Eiðr said: "This is a good offer, father, to take self-judgment from the hands of such a man as Thórðr is." Skeggi accepted this offer, and awarded himself ten cows. Thórðr said: "This shall be paid." Both parties were well satisfied, and parted in friendship.

Chapter 13

Shortly after the wedding, Thórðr spoke to Eiðr, and said: "I do wish, my foster-son, that you would ride with me north to Miklibær, and woo Olöf Hrolleif’s daughter, on my behalf." Eiðr says: "My duty it is, my foster-father, to ride whithersoever you wish me." Thereupon they all ride from home, Thórðr, and Eiðr, Ásbjörn, Eyjulfr, and Steingrímrr, until they come to Miklibær. They were well received there. In the morning Thórðr told his errand, and wooed Olöf. She willingly accepted the offer, and the bargain was soon concluded; there were witnesses as to the promise of marriage, and after that they rode home. The housewife, Olöf, held the wedding at her place. Thórðr bade Eiðr to the feast, as well as his brother-in-law Ásbjörn, and on their return presented them with fine gifts. In the spring Thórðr commenced farming at Miklibær, but his brothers, Eyjulfr and Steingrímrr, lived at Ós, in Miðfjörðr. Thórðr soon became a wealthy man through his skill in his craft.

A man is named Thorgils, who was a good farmer; he lived at Hrafhagili in Eyjafjörðr. He sent Thórðr word to come north to him, and build his hall. Thórðr promised to go, and when he was ready, he rode from home and had one man with him; they went up Skagafjörðr and north over Öxnadalsheiði. About this time a ship came across the ocean and put in at Gásir in Eyjafjörðr. On board this ship was a man hight Sörli, and called Sörli the Strong; he was the strongest of all men, and better fighter than any one; he was a fine man and well liked by everybody. He was an uncle of Ormr, whom Thórðr slew, and of Ásbjörn. Sörli gets himself horses, and intends riding west to Miðfjörðr, to his kinsmen. He had heard of the manslaughter of his kinsman Ormr; he rode from the ship with seventeen men up the Öxnadalr and over the heath to Lurkasteinn. This same day Thórðr the Terror rode across the heath on to the hills above Lurkasteinn. He observed then where eighteen men made their appearance; he thought he knew who they were, and dismounted. They soon came nearer. Thórðr greets them, and asks what the name of their chief is. He answered and said that his name was Sörli. "Are you called

Sörli the Strong?" says Thórðr. "You may call me so if you like," says Sörli, "and who are you?" "I am hight Thórðr," says he. "Are you Thórðr the Terror, who slew my kinsman Ormr?" "That is the same man," says Thórðr, "and you may avenge him if you like; I have not, however, prepared myself to meet you, for I did not know you had arrived in this country, and weregild have I paid for the manslaughter of your kinsman." Sörli said: "Nothing have you paid me, but I shall not take advantage over you. All my men shall sit by, but we two will fight together; and should I fall, I forbid each one of my men to do you any harm." Thereupon they advanced towards one another, and fought very boldly. Thórðr soon found that Sörli was a great man because of his skill in arms, and he thought that a stronger man he had never met. They inflicted great wounds upon one another, but so it ended, that Sörli fell dead to the ground, and Thórðr was so exhausted that he could not help himself on to the horse, without being supported by his companions, and that was as much as they could do: they now rode down Öxnadalr to a farm called Þverá. There lived a good man by name of Einarr. He received Thórðr well, and Thórðr was laid up there for á long time, but at last healed. Sörli was buried in a cairn on the hill where the fight took place, and his death was thought a very great loss.

Chapter 14

Now there is to be said, that when Thórðr had recovered from his wounds he rode to Hrafnagil and built there a hall in the summer, which is standing to the present day. He has also built the hall at Höfði in Höfðahverfi. After this Thórðr rode west through the counties, and came to terms with his brother-in-law Ásbjörn and Skeggi as to the manslaughter of Sörli. Thereupon he rode north to his estate at Miklibær. Ásbjörn purchased Rakkaland in Miðfjörðr and dwelt there for three winters. He was very turbulent-minded, so much so that he could not stop there with his kinsmen; therefore he sold the land and went abroad, and took up his abode in Norway, and there increased his kin. Their married life turned out a happy one, and Sigríðr was accounted of as the most notable of women, wherein, indeed, she took after her kin. Eiðr spent his life mostly in trading voyages, or as a henchman of noble lords, and was always held of great worth. But when tired of that kind of life, he settled down as a householder. In his advanced age, Skeggi went south to Ás in Borgar-fjörðr to his son Eiðr, and remained there unto his death. He was laid in a how to the north of the "garth;" and still his bones may be seen in the "night-meal-beacon." Eiðr lived at Ás to a good old age, and he and his foster-father, Thórðr, were always in the habit of visiting each other, and to exchange fair gifts, nor was there ever a flaw in their friendship as long as they lived. After his departure from Norway, Thórðr never saw that country again, having been made an outlaw from it, together with his brothers, for the slaughter of King Sigurðr, "Slefa," the son of Eric.

From Thórðr a great family has descended, and many noble men both in Norway and Iceland. It is commonly said, that the prophecy of Thórðr that in Miðfjörðr there would always be disturbances, has come true; for there folk have been always more quarrelsome than in other districts. Thórðr himself died in his bed, and no more have we heard truthfully told of him, and so here cometh to an end the story of Thórðr Hreða (the Terror).